

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
Hyde School District 34-1
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006-2007**

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Dates of On Site Visit: March 12, 2007

Date of Report: March 21, 2007

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

- Promising Practice** The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
- Meets Requirements** The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
- Needs Assistance** The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement and is out of compliance.
- Needs Intervention** The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement and is out of compliance.
- Not applicable** In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.
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Principle 1 – General Supervision

General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- District Comprehensive Plan
- Special Ed File Review
- Staff, Student, Parent Surveys

- Data Table C

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded Hyde School District meets the requirement in all areas under the provision general supervision. The district has an established and effectively implemented ongoing child find system to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities, ages birth through 21 years, who may need special education or special education and related services, including a pre-referral and referral system that meets present requirements. The district comprehensive plan procedures meet the state/federal requirements for students placed in private schools. Hyde School District uses data-based decision making procedures to review and analyze school district level data to determine if the district is making progress toward the state's performance goals and indicators. The district reviews and analyzes discipline data and revises policies/procedures if significant discrepancies are occurring between the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for children with and without disabilities. The district employs or contracts with an adequate supply of personnel who are appropriately supervised and fully licensed or certified to work with children with disabilities. The district implements procedures to determine personnel development needs and takes appropriate action to meet those identified needs.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through file review and staff interview the monitoring team validates all the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision general supervision.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- District comprehensive plan
- Special education file review
- Student survey
- Parent survey
- Staff survey
- Data Table I
- IDEA application
- Record/data review

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded Hyde School District provides a free appropriate education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities. As reflected in the district comprehensive plan, the district ensures that eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative school days will be provided with FAPE should such a situation occur.

Validation Result

Meets requirements

Through file review the monitoring team validates all steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision free appropriate public education.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Prior notice
- Evaluation report
- Surveys
- List of out of district testing services used by the district
- Number of placement committee overrides

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district is in compliance in the area of evaluation timelines. All evaluation timelines were met except for one file in which the district did not receive student records for a transfer student in a timely manner, resulting in the student's three year reevaluation date not being met. In another file the district did not evaluate prior to dismissal as the student met his/her goals and the IEP was an override. Prior notice/consent for evaluation was in all but for one file.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded the district does not consistently adhere to all evaluation procedures, especially the use of the TAT prior to referral.

Out of compliance

The steering committee concluded the district is out of compliance in the some areas of evaluation.

The district does not consistently evaluate in all areas of suspected disability. The district also did not consistently evaluate in all areas listed on the prior notice for

evaluation. Gathering and analyzing functional assessment information during the evaluation process was not consistently completed. All evaluation reports were not in the student file.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through file review the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under appropriate evaluation. Evaluation timelines were met in all files reviewed.

Out of Compliance - Needs Assistance

The monitoring team validates the steering committee findings identified as out of compliance under the provision appropriate evaluation.

CFR 300.304 Evaluation Procedures (a)Notice The public agency must provide notice to the parents of a child with a disability, in accordance with 300.503, that describes any evaluation procedures the agency proposes to conduct.

CRF 300.301 initial evaluation (a) General. Each public agency must conduct a full and individual initial evaluation, in accordance with 300.305 and 300.306 before the initial provisions of special education and related services to a child with a disability under this part.

The monitoring team determined the district did not consistently evaluate all areas listed on the prior notice/consent for evaluation. In one case parent gave consent for evaluation to be conducted in ability, achievement, fine motor, speech and language. But there was no evidence of a fine motor evaluation being administered as there were no reports in the file, there was no Occupational Therapist invited to the meeting but OT evaluation results were on the eligibility document. In another case the district obtained consent to evaluate a preschool student in all developmental areas (cognitive, motor, social/adaptive and communication) but the student was evaluated only in the area of articulation and language. The student was then listed on the child count as a student with a disability in the category of 570, a category the evaluation process did not support. In a third file the district evaluated in areas not listed on the prior notice/consent for evaluation. The area of articulation was evaluated but was not listed on the prior notice/consent for evaluation.

The district must evaluate in all areas of suspected disability to ensure a full and individual evaluation is conducted. In one case the parent had expressed a concern in the area of behavior in the parent input form but the district did not evaluate in this area nor explain on the prior notice/consent to evaluate why the district chose not to evaluate in the area.

The district needs to ensure the evaluation results support the disability category listed on the child count. In two cases the students' disability category listed on the child count is 570 but evaluation results support the disability category 550. These two students will be reevaluated before the next child count.

CFR 300.304 Evaluation Procedures the public agency must (1) use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parents that may assist in determining whether the child is a child with a disability and the content of the child's IEP.

Through file review the monitoring team determined the district does not consistently analyze and summarize functional academic and transition assessment results so as to aid in the development of the IEP. The district is evaluating in these areas but must summarize the results in order to be useful in developing the IEP.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Teacher file review
- Surveys
- Parental Rights Document
- Consent and prior notice forms
- Comprehensive plan

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district meets requirements under procedural safeguards.

Parental rights are afforded to parents on an annual basis. Graduation requirements are addressed one year prior to graduation. The district has ensured that the child's rights are protected by a surrogate parent if no parent is identified. Parents of a child in need of special education or special education and related services are informed that they have the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records through their parental rights booklet and the local newspaper. The special education handbook and the parental rights document the policies and procedures that are in place for responding to requests for due process that ensure compliance. The district has obtained consent for initial placement into special education for all students except for one.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through file review the monitoring team validates all the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision procedural safeguards.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- File reviews
- Student progress data

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district meets requirements under the provision Individualized Education Program. The district ensures written notice is provided for all IEP meetings. The district uses the DDN Campus form for prior notice with the addition of the statement regarding the invitation of other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding their child. The IEP team is consistently comprised of appropriate team membership. Transition plans for students are a coordinated set of activities, reflecting student strengths and interests, to prepare them for post school activities for student's age 16 years old or younger if appropriate. The district ensures the IEP contains all required content. The district consistently writes goals that are measurable. The district reviews and revises each student IEP on an annual basis.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team validates some of the steering committee findings as meeting requirements under the provision Individualized Education Program. The district consistently reviews and revises each student's IEP on an annual basis. Prior notices for meetings are consistently sent to parents giving them five day notice prior to the meeting. The district uses state approved IEP forms and ensures appropriate IEP membership. The district has made great improvement in the area of transition evaluation and addressing transition to promote a positive movement to meet the student's post secondary goals. The district will need to ensure that transition planning is individualized as per each student's interests and needs.

Needs Assistance

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program (IEP)

Present level of academic achievement and functional performance

A student's IEP must contain present level of academic achievement and functional performance based upon the skill areas affected by the student's identified disability. The present level of academic achievement and functional performance

are based upon the functional (skill based) assessment information gathered during the comprehensive evaluation process. Each student's individualized education program shall include: (1) A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance, including : (a) How the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled students) (3) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student. (4) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class and in activities described in this section;

The monitoring team determined the district has made improvement in the area of IEP content but student files did not consistently reflect skill based strengths and needs, how the student's disability affects progress in the general curriculum, a description of services the district is committed to provide and a clear explanation of what instructional needs require the student to be removed from the regular classroom.

The district did not consistently document skill based specific strengths and needs in the areas affected by the disability. In several files the district used the evaluator's general statements in the psychoeducational report ("student's spelling score was well below average ...") which is not skill specific and did not aide in the development of the IEP.

In several other files the district did not clearly explain how the disability affects the student's progress in the general curriculum. A statement such as "student needs the extra one-on-one help in the area of reading" or "the student requires assistance in all areas to improve skills needed to function in a classroom" may explain instructional needs but it does not explain how the student's disability affects their progress and involvement in the general education curriculum.

The district did not consistently describe the services the district is committed to provide. "Special Education Services for 25 hours per week" does not describe what specific services the district will provide.

The district did not consistently explain (justify) what instructional needs the student requires that would result in the student being removed from the regular classroom. Resource Room Accepted: "The committee determined this to be the best placement for student. Student will attend the resource room for several classes..." Does not explain why the student needs to be removed from the regular classroom to get instruction.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- District comprehensive plan
- Special education file review
- Staff survey
- Data Tables J, F

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district meets the requirement that all children receive services in the least restrictive environment with the supports each needs for their successful participation.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through file review the monitoring team validates all the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision least restrictive environment.